



LEEC

LOUISIANA ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION COMMISSION

What's Inside!

LEEC News, Editorial

1

Resources

2

A Weekly Compilation of Environmental Education News from Across Louisiana

LEEC NEWS

SYMPOSIUM SHORT COURSE PROPOSALS DUE SEPT. 15

The Louisiana Environmental Education Commission is accepting proposals for day-long short courses to be held in conjunction with the 18th Annual Environmental Education State Symposium. This year's conference will be held at the Baton Rouge Marriott, February 27-28, 2015.

All short courses will take place on Friday, February 27, 2015 in the Baton Rouge area. The theme for this conference will be "Biodiversity in Our World." It is not necessary for presenters to adhere to the theme, but short courses that complement the theme are encouraged.

Proposals are due on or before Monday, September 15, 2014.

Find the web application form at <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/2015-environmental-education-symposium-short-course-presenter-form> or download a Microsoft Word version [here](#). Send completed Word form to vortego@wlf.la.gov or print and mail to:

Venise Ortego
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
5652 Hwy 182.
Opelousas, LA 70570

EDITORIAL

TED TALK : HUMAN COMPASSION AFFECTS SPECIES SURVIVAL

I recently watched a [TED Talk](#) recorded this spring that reminded me just how much our perception of certain species affects the effort we put into conserving them. It begins with the oft-told tale of Teddy Roosevelt's bear hunt in Mississippi and the birth of the teddy bear. I won't give too much away, but there is a lot more to the story than we often hear. The transformation of bears from fairytale villains to cuddly toys and our subsequent efforts to protect them demonstrates how powerful an impact the stories we tell each other about animals has on their survival.

Armed with new social science data, presenter Jon Mooallem examines why we care about some species and not others. The surprising findings offer insight into our collective conscious in a speech that is often as funny as it is thought-provoking.

As I listened, I immediately thought about the [Louisiana pine snake](#). It's an endangered species in need of all of our help, but efforts to conserve it are limited mostly to a few dedicated biologists and wildlife agencies. Despite its stunning beauty and reclusive nature, people just don't feel compelled to save it.

Well, it's time that changed. It's our responsibility to reshape the way people think about pine snakes and other creatures that depend on us to preserve them. We need to make them the heroes of their own stories while they're still around, or they'll be the victims of the stories we tell about them after they are gone.

RESOURCES

AWARD-WINNING BIRDWATCHING LESSON

Combining science instruction and Common Core literacy standards, this engaging introduction to bird-watching encourages kids to get outdoors with a sketchbook and really look around. Full-color illustrations portray dozens of birds chatting about their distinctive characteristics, including color, shape, plumage, and beak and foot types. The book also provides some guidance on how to go about observing and sketching birds.

Find the lesson on the [ScienceNetLinks website](#).

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.



A PLETHORA OF PODCASTS

Find podcasts on a dazzling array of subjects from peanut allergies to dolphin intelligence all in a kid-friendly context.

Visit the ScienceNetLinks Science update page at <http://sciencenetlinks.com/science-news/science-updates/>.

WIN \$50 FOR YOUR CLASSROOM WITH THE MYSTERY PHOTO CONTEST

Kids can enter as individuals or as a class group to guess the subject of the mystery photo and win. Contest ends September 15. See details [here](#).

ALGAL BLOOM PHOTO CONTEST

The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) want YOU to help spot and document algal blooms in our waters. Submit your **photos of algal blooms** where you live, vacation and recreate for a chance to win great prizes. Your submissions will help build a photo library that can be used to educate more people about algal blooms and illustrate the prevalence and impacts of algal blooms around the country.

Find out more at <http://neefusa.org/algalbloomcontest>.

CAMPUS RAINWORKS CHALLENGE

U.S. EPA's Office of Water has announced the third annual Campus RainWorks Challenge for undergraduate and graduate students. Once again, EPA is inviting student teams to design an innovative green infrastructure project for their campus showing how managing storm water at its source can benefit the campus community and the environment.

Check out [EPA's website](#) for more information.

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